84240

AAR # 659 - U

AFTER ACTION REPORT

68th AMD INF BN

14TH ARMORED DIVISION

Dec 44 thru Feb 45

84240

314.7 898

HEADQUARTERS 68TH ARMORED INFANTRY BATTALION
A.P.O. 446 U.S. ARMY

UNIT HISTORY

Period: 1 December 1944 - 31 December 1944.

1200	1 Dec 44	Complete relief of this unit by 2d Bn 442d Inf (Maritime Alps Campaign).
1800	1 Dec 44	Unit arrived Frejus, France from Peira Cava, France mounted. Entire unit assembled.
0700	2 Dec 44	Unit moved on mounted march to St. Raphael, France to rail-head for loading.
——	2 Dec 44	First and Second Sections of Train I loaded weapons, vehicles, and personnel for movement (1st Sec, Train I - Hq & Hq Co, Co A, 1 Platoon Co B, Pers Sec) (2d Sec, Train I - balance Co B. Train II (Co C) also loaded weapons, vehicles, and personnel for movement.
1730	2 Dec 44	Train I left St. Raphael, France.
0200	3 Dec 44	Train II left St. Raphael, France.
0700	3 Dec 44	Wheeled vehicle convoy left St. Martin-du-Var, France.
——	3 Dec 44	Trains I and II and wheeled vehicle convoy enroute to destination.
——	4 Dec 44	Trains I and II and wheeled vehicle convoy enroute to destination.
——	5 Dec 44	Trains I and II and wheeled vehicle convoy enroute to destination.
0300	6 Dec 44	Train I arrived Evinaux, France (V008886).
0330	6 Dec 44	Personnel and vehicles of Train I detrained and began mounted road march.
1430	6 Dec 44	Personnel of Train I arrived at Schwindratzheim, France (Q900171).
1900	6 Dec 44	Wheeled vehicle convoy arrived at Schwindratzheim, France.
2000	6 Dec 44	Train II arrived Evinaux, France (V00[illegible]), detrained and began mounted road march.
0100	7 Dec 44	Personnel of Train II arrived at Schwindratzheim, France (Q900171).
——	7 Dec 44	Unit reorganized and prepared for future operations.
——	8 Dec 44	Platoons of Hq Co, Co A, Co B, and Co C reconnoitered surrounding towns of Brumath ([illegible]), [illegible]artheim (R015135), Weyersheim (V050130), Hoenheim (R015025), Souffelweyerheim (R004040), and Reichstett (R014052). All reported roads <u>only</u> could be used by tanks and half-tracks. Bridges in good shape. Terrain generally flat, wet, and boggy. All surrounding streams flooded. Shoulders of roads clear of mines. Report submitted to CCR, 14th AD.
1[illegible]	8 Dec 44	One (1) half-track lost by Co C NE town of Niederschaeffolsheim (R005190). Track hit mine, blowing same up. Ey fire exploded gas tank and vehicle was completely demolished. All personnel escaped without injury.
——	9 Dec 44	Preparation for battle commitment.

----	10 Dec 44	Preparation for battle committment.
----	11 Dec 44	Co [illegible], 47th Tk Bn, joined this unit for coming operation and Co [illegible], this unit, joined 47th Tk Bn for coming operation.
16[illegible]	12 Dec 44	1st Platoon Co [illegible], 68th, sent to assist Division Task Force as outpost security vic Surbourg (084345).
----	13 Dec 44	Unit alert awaiting battle committment.
[illegible]	14 Dec 44	Co [illegible], 47th Tk [illegible], released to join 47th Tk Bn.
0800	14 Dec 44	Co [illegible], 68th, released and rejoined this unit.
1015	14 Dec 44	Received [illegible], 14th AD, at [illegible]cherlenheim, France ([illegible]8631[illegible]) [illegible] mounted road march [illegible] new assembly area at 1045.
1105	14 Dec 44	Bn cleared [illegible]tzheim, France ([illegible]).
1345	14 Dec 44	Bn closed in [illegible] assembly area at [illegible]betschdorf, France ([illegible]) [illegible]betschdorf, France ([illegible]34332).
1445	14 Dec 44	Fragmentary orders issued to I&R Platoon for route reconnaissance north from present location.
1715	14 Dec 44	I&R Platoon returned from reconnaissance mission. Cleared towns of Oberseebach ([illegible]7410) and [illegible]schbach, France (R182372). For results of road reconnaissance see overlay.
14[illegible]	15 Dec 44	Unit received order from CCR, 14th AD, to proceed on mounted road march to Oberseebach, France ([illegible]7410).
15[illegible]	15 Dec 44	Unit crossed IP at Niederbetschdorf, France (R134332) on mounted road march.
17[illegible]	15 Dec 44	Unit closed in at Oberseebach, France ([illegible]187410). One (1) M8 Assault Gun casualty (breakdown) enroute. Trains to remain at Niederbetschdorf and revert to Service Co and be brought forward under Trains Comdr later.
17[illegible]	15 Dec 44	Outposted town of Oberseebach, France (R187410).
[illegible]	16 Dec 44	Bn Ex [illegible] contacted CCB, 14th AD, to discover situation in their sector. S-3 and Commo Officer contacted elements of 62d Armd Inf Bn in Wissembourg, France (R155485) to determine developments in their sector.
1630	16 Dec 44	Above party returned to CP.
15[illegible]	17 Dec 44	Received orders from CG, 14th AD, to relieve 62d Armd Inf Bn.
15[illegible]	17 Dec 44	[illegible] march order issued to CO's and Platoon Leaders (see written march order attached). Companies to be moved off road in Altenstadt ([illegible]). Co [illegible], this Bn, to be prepared to join 25th Tk Bn vic of [illegible] ([illegible]210595). [illegible] in charge of mounted road march.
16[illegible]5	17 Dec 44	Bn crossed IP to begin relief of 62d Armd Inf Bn.
[illegible]05	17 Dec 44	Co B and Co C moved up to line to relieve 62d Armd Inf Bn, following order issued by CCA, 14th AD, at 1930. Co B, 68th, to relieve Co [illegible], 62d, and Co C, 68th, to relieve Co C, 62d.
24[illegible]	17 Dec 44	Ron Patrols #1 & 2 out, consisting of one officer and 3 EM each.
[illegible]	18 Dec 44	Last of column closed in at Schweigen, Germany (R160505).
[illegible]	18 Dec 44	Patrol #1 in. Patrol reported they drew several rounds burp gun fire from vic of (190523), also drew more burp gun fire from vic of ([illegible]) at 0300. No activity noticed in village, but several [illegible] appeared to be moving around on high ground north of village. White flares went off intermittently from hill north of village. At [illegible]15 heard burp gun continuing to fire southward. Saw caliber [illegible] fire going [illegible]ward. Drew rifle fire

~~0545~~	18 Dec 44	from vic (186522) while at (188519). Searchlights after planes went on about 0230. Two piles of ammo at (193517) - about 15 cases in one and 12 in another. Artillery falling all along high ground West of Ober Otterbach.
0545	18 Dec 44	Patrol #2 in. Patrol reached vic of (177515) where it was fired on by SAF from (176521) and (174522). Heard burp gun fire at 0350. German patrol estimated as three (3) men heard in the vic of (178519) traveling southeast at 0425. While at (180518) patrol received approximately fifteen (15) rds rifle fire from vic of (179521) and vic of (182521) at 0435. Flares on high ground above town of Ober Otterbach.
0745	18 Dec 44	Attack launched per Operational Instructions #6, Hq CCA, 14th AD. Ten minute preperation fired by 500th Field Arty on Ober Otterbach, Germany (R175528) and stream line running thru town. Co B on the right, Co C on the left astride the road. Two platoons Co B, 25th Tk Bn, deployed on high ground overlooking town for close support of infantry. No resistance encountered until forward elements reached position about 300 yds south of bridge over the Quar River. At this time hvy mortar and some arty fire was concentrated approx (168519). The assault elements continued attack with Co B circling the town on east, reaching vic cemetery (174527). Communication with Co C only occasionally. One platoon tanks followed infantry into town. Tanks stopped by road block in southern edge of town. Road block held up operations one hour and a half. Tanks continued to move thru village but stopped by blown bridge in approx center of town. Dozer unable to find material to make fill; obstacle held up operations approx two hours until engineers repaired it. Smoke fired by arty on possible ey OP's from high ground vic (158539). Smoke drifted to north edge of town. Enemy launched counter-attack under cover of this smoke. Tanks and infantry forced to withdraw to high ground overlooking town from south. Two platoons, Co B, unable to withdraw due to automatic weapons and sniper fire. Men in these platoons infiltrated back during reorganization.
1430	18 Dec 44	Reorganization commenced and completed 1800. Numerous enemy snipers made evacuation extremely difficult. Heavy Machine Gun Platoon placed on right flank to strengthen defensive fires. Frequent arty and mortar fire fell throughout sector during operation.
——	19 Dec 44	Right flank extended making front [illegible] yds wide. Per Operational Instructions #10, Hq CCA, 14th AD, troops dug in further and held high ground south of Ober Otterbach. Heavy enemy arty and mortar fire throughout day in our sector. Co C, 48th Tk Bn, fired on known pillboxes; effect unknown. Ceased firing with tanks at [illegible] to allow arty to adjust 8" howitzers. Visibility decreased making observed fire impossible. Harassing missions to be fired throughout night. Co B, 25th Tk Bn, replaced by Co C, 48th Tk Bn, C Troop 94th Rcn (less one plat) attached. [illegible] Platoon, Co C, 125th Engrs, attchd. 500th FA in support.

2130 19 Dec 44 Rcn Patrols #3 & 4 out, consisting of one officer and 3 EM each.

0030 20 Dec 44 Patrol #3 in. Reached vic (178528). At that point patrol was halted by a German. Patrol hit the ground . They were then fired on with several rifle shots. Heard and then saw Germans move around patrols' left; Germans were attempting to cut off patrol so patrol withdrew. A large fire which was so intense that it lit up one side of the town of Ober Otterback was observed. Patrol observed some Germans attempting to extinguish a fire at (178521). Patrol received rifle fire from (180529). After patrol withdrew MG fire was observed striking the position they had been in from the same vicinity.

0030 20 Dec 44 Patrol #4 in. At (190512) patrol observed a fire and heard a tank motor running in that same general direction. By light of fire at (190512) saw what appeared to be individuals moving about at approx (187514); also observed what appeared to be tracks of horse-drawn cassions (181518); tracks about twelve inches wide and six to eight inches deep. At (184520) patrol received 3 rds rifle fire coming from right front. Heard burst of MG fire from left front. Heard movement of men to left of position - number unknown.

—— 20 Dec 44 Troops remained at dug-in positions on high ground south of Ober Otterbach. Artillery active, firing on ey positions and pill-boxes.

2030 20 Dec 44 Rcn Patrol #5 out, consisting of one officer and 3 EM.

2130 20 Dec 44 Rcn Patrol #6 out, consisting of one officer and 3 EM.

0100 21 Dec 44 Rcn Patrol #5 in. From R.C. at (181517) patrol could hear few scattered rounds SAF in area North of that point. Arrived at hard surfaced E-W road at (186521), started north and received MG fire from NW and NE. From that position they could see big glow over the crest of the ridge from right front. Remained in that position approx one hour. MG bursts once in a while during that time. Approx 6 rounds of arty landed in area approx 200 yds north of patrol during that time. On way back could see MG tracer coming toward our lines from NE to SW.

0100 21 Dec 44 Rcn Patrol #6 in. Patrol reported when they reached vic (17905175) received two rds tracer from right front. Patrol moved north to (17905185) and received 3 rds mortar fire from approx 20° az. Patrol moved back to (180516), remained there for about one-half hour, then moved north again by route about 100 yds West of where they had received the fire. They reached the stream in vic (178512) and received two more rds tracer from left front and two rds tracer from right front and two rds mortar. They were in creek bed about 20 minutes. During that time they received about six bursts of burp gun fire and 15 to 20 rds MG fire. The stream is about 7 ft. deep at that point and water about 10 in. deep. This SAF passed directly over their heads as they were in the stream. During entire patrol they observed big glow over the ridge on left front.

0600 21 Dec 44 Co C withdrew under cover of darkness to Line 1 where new positions were dug. Two platoons, Co C, 48th Tk Bn, moved into firing position vic (177520) to (188518). Two 105mm howitzer AG's accompanied this platoon and fired fuze T105CPC at visible ey fortifications. Co C, prior to withdrawing, set up dummy

	21 Dec 44	emplacements with helmets mounted on stakes and "C" ration cans, simulating telescopes.
1615	21 Dec 44	One German soldier walked into our lines and surrendered.
1630	21 Dec 44	Co C returned to forward dug-in positions.
——	21 Dec 44	Enemy arty expended on dummy emplacements. One 105mm AG succeeded in knocking off a corner of one pillbox. Result of other 105 AG undetermined.
0600	22 Dec 44	Co B withdrew under cover of darkness to Line 1 where new positions were dug. Two platoons, Co C, 48th Tk Bn, moved into firing position vic (177520) to (188518) to fire on visible enemy pillboxes and any possible ey positions. Tank fire had no apparent effect on fortifications. Co B, prior to withdrawing, set up dummy emplacements similar to those set up by Co C on 21 Dec 44. Ey artillery and mortar active throughout day.
1630	22 Dec 44	Co B returned to their forward dug-in positions.
——	22 Dec 44	Arty in support of our troops active, firing on ey fortifications.
0100	23 Dec 44	Two three-man ey patrols dispersed; one ey wounded and two killed.
0600	23 Dec 44	Co C withdrew under cover of darkness to Line 1 and rear dug-in positions. Two platoons, Co C, 48th Tk Bn, moved into firing position vic (177520) to (188518) to fire on ey fortifications. Effect unknown; visibility very poor. Arty supporting our troops, active on ey fortifications. Ey arty and mortar active throughout day.
1630	23 Dec 44	Co C returned to their forward dug-in positions.
0900	23 Dec 44	Officers from 3d Bn, 315th Inf (relieving unit) reconnoitered our positions and made preparation to take over our sector.
——	23 Dec 44	Co B and Co C remained in forward dug-in positions throughout day. Arty supporting our troops, firing on ey fortifications. Ey arty also active throughout day.
1800	23 Dec 44	Relief began; verbal march order issued (see copy of written march order). Co B and Co C relieved by platoons from the exterior flank. Companies to reorganize in Schweigen to proceed to Merkwiller. Complete relief to be effected by 2400, this date. Co C, 48th Tk Bn, to be relieved by one platoon Co A, 47th Tk Bn. First of column crossed IP at Schweigen, Germany.
2115	23 Dec 44	Relief of this unit completed by 3d Bn, 315th Inf.
2330	23 Dec 44	Bn closed in completely at Merkwiller, France (R070372) and Diffenbach-les-Woerth, France. See overlay for location of troops.
——	24 Dec 44	Unit reorganizing at Merkwiller and Diffenbach-les-Woerth.
——	25 Dec 44	Unit in bivouac at Merkwiller and Diffenbach-les-Woerth. No change in location of troops.
——	26 Dec 44	Unit in bivouac at Merkwiller and Diffenbach-les-Woerth. No change in location of troops.
——	27 Dec 44	Unit in bivouac at Merkwiller and Diffenbach-les-Woerth. Training schedule being carried out (see atchd Tg Schs covering this period). Road reconnaissance to the north made by I&R Platoon. For results see atchd overlay.
——	28 Dec 44	Unit in bivouac at Merkwiller and Diffenbach-les-Woerth. Officers and key NCO's attended Counter-Sabotage Demonstration held by VI Corps.

UNIT HISTORY - 1 Dec 44 to 31 Dec 44 (Continued)

2200	28 Dec 44	Unit plus attachments (C-48th Tk Bn, 2d Plat Co C 94th Ren) began mounted road march to new area. See atchd march order. For route of march see atchd overlay.
0345	28 Dec 44	Last elements of march column closed in new area. Unit and attachments in bivouac at Schoenbourg (Q655259), Lohr (Q639285), and Ottwiller (Q628296). See overlay for location of troops and outposts.
——	30 Dec 44	Unit and attachments in bivouac at Schoenbourg, Lohr, and Ottwiller. Current training schedule being carried out (see atchd copy covering this period). CG, 14th AD, decorated two officers and five EM, this unit, with Bronze Stars. Road and terrain reconnaissance made by I&R Platoon. For results see overlay.
——	31 Dec 44	Unit and attachments in bivouac at Schoenbourg, Lohr, and Ottwiller. Current training schedule being carried out (see atchd copy covering this period). Officers planning and reconnoitering area for Defensive Position (mixed Inf-Tk Bn) Demonstration. Sketch (full size drawing) of German Crockery Mine which was found in Bn CP at Schoenbourg upon arrival there, submitted to CCA, 14th AD.

HEADQUARTERS 68TH ARMORED INFANTRY BATTALION
A.P.O. 446 U.S. ARMY

JANUARY UNIT HISTORY NARRATIVE

1 Jan 45 - Balance Trp C 94 Rcn and 1st Plat C-125 Engrs joined unit 0930 for movement. Bn and attachments began mounted road march from Schoenbourg 010945 Jan 45. For route of march see overlay. Bn and attachments closed in new areas at Rahling 011356 Jan 45. For location of troops see overlay. Co C moved into new positions 1530. 68 to establish holding position on commanding ground in present sector, using AT Guns, AG's, Mortars, Cal. 50, Cal. 30 MG's and S/A wpns for close in defense. Mission of 68 to establish center of resistance from which tks can maneuver atking from S, SW, or E thru our position. Our disposition to hold a fixed defense so tks can attack. Reconnoiter road system to E, SE of present position to E boundary of XV Corps because if ey atks thru woods, AT Guns and bazookas of this unit may be ordered to E against flank of such and atk. 68 be prepared to drop back to alternate positions vic Schmidtville, similar to positions in Rahling area to repel C/Atk. See atchd overlay of roving patrols of C-94 connecting their CP's.

2 Jan 45 - Bn and attachments began mounted road march to new area; head of column crossed IP 021252 Jan 45. Tail of column closed in at Niedersoultzbach 021655 Jan 45. See atchd overlay for route. B-68 (2 rifle plats) with 1-C-125 Engrs to outpost asgd sector (see overlay submitted) to detect and defeat any attempted ey infiltration from woods from NW or thru our flanks. One rifle plat of B-68 in support. C-48 and C-68 in reserve. 1-C-125 Engrs preparing road and tree demolitions.

3 Jan 45 - B-68 outposting asgd sector (see overlay for their dispositions) to prevent any attempted ey infiltration from woods from NW or thru our flanks. One rifle plat, B-68, in support. C-48 and C-68 in reserve.

4 Jan 45 - B-68 cont'd to outpost asgd sector to prevent any attempted ey infiltration from woods from NW or thru our flanks. One rifle plat, B-68, in support. C-48 and C-68 in reserve. I&R Plat motorized patrols making contact with friendly troops at Erkartswiller to obtain situation and also security patrol to Dossenheim. Patrols continuing throughout night every 3 hrs. See atchd overlay covering patrol routes.

5 Jan 45 - Tactical situation the same. Balance of unit and attachment carrying out training schedule (see copy atchd). One section I&R Plat continued motorized contact patrols to Co [illegible] Inf Regt at [illegible]seman every two hrs throughout day and night; one section I&R plat cont'd security patrol to [illegible] every three hrs throughout [illegible].

6 Jan 45 - B-68 relieved from outpost mission by 1 plat [illegible] at [illegible]. B-68 [illegible] in [illegible]bourg. Balance of unit carried out training

CLASSIFICATION CHANGED TO:
CANCELLED
BY AUTHORITY OF THE ADJUTANT GENERAL
DOWNGRADING COMMITTEE ....

6 Jan 45 - schedule (see atchd copy). 1-C-125 Engrs and C Trp 94 (-) joined
(Cont'd) unit for mtd march to Soultz-sous-Forets. Unit and atchments crossed IP 2045 on mtd march. (For route of march see overlay).

7 Jan 45 - Unit and attachments closed in new area at Soultz-sous-Forets 0432. C Trp 94 (-) relieved from atchment to 68. Unit reorganizing for any forthcoming mission. 1-C-125 made road rcn covering roads in immediate sector (see atchd overlay).

8 Jan 45 - At 0300, Co B, 827th TD Bn, joined 68. Rcn made by I&R Plat and CO, B-827 for defensive positions in vic of Soultz-sous-Forets. At 1615 B-827 made practice move to defensive firing positions on high ground approx 1/2 mi. N of Soultz-sous-Forets and upon completion returned to Soultz-sous-Forets.

9 Jan 45 - Unit and attachments remained alert for movement. 1 Plat B-827 TD moved per request of Task Force Wahl at 1325 to vic N of Hatten. At 1500 balance B-827 TD Bn and C-48 Tk Bn joined forces engaged in tk battle N of Hatten. Rcn made by CO and S-3 in conjunction with I&R Plat to select defensive position sites in this sector. See atchd Plan for Defense.

10 Jan 45 - Unit and atchments remained alert for movement in any direction. A-48 Tk Bn joined this unit 101930 Jan 45.

11 Jan 45 - Unit and atchments began mtd road march, starting at 0530, to Kuhlendorf. Last elements closed Kuhlendorf 0625. B-68 and C-68 dug in defensive positions on high ground SE of town. Launched atk against Rittershoffen at 1545. B-68 relieved to join 48 Tk Bn prior to atk and A-68 rejoined 68. Inf, with A-48 Tk, advanced to within approx 200 yds of town; pinned down by hvy SAF and arty fire. 500 AFA (supporting 68) fired several rds smoke but visibility was too poor to observe. At dark Inf and tks withdrew to line (see atchd overlay) and dug in defensive positions. Hourly patrols contacting 48 Tk Bn on right and Co G, 222d Inf.

12 Jan 45 - At 0800 coordinated atk launched on Rittershoffen from high ground (see overlay of 11 Jan). Advanced and Fwd CP was set up in Rittershoffen at 1015. Atk divided into assault groups. Ey Tk, MG, and sniper fire held up troops in North center of town, and forced to withdraw to main street (Ck Pt 1, South). At dark outposted sector in our hands (see overlay). A-48 withdrew at dark to same position as last night with 1-C-125 out in front (for position see overlay). Contact being made with CCB outpost hourly on half-hour and B-68 hourly on half hour, beginning at 1930. PW's: 1

13 Jan 45 - Resumed atk on Rittershoffen at 0800. (Ref: Sketch of Town) Progressed slowly from positions on main street of Rittershoffen. A-68 advanced slowly up street to left while C-68 advanced slowly up street NE of Ck Pt 1 South, both working in tk-inf teams. Intense SAF and mort fire (ey) from NE and N part of town around Ck Pt 1, North. Ey arty intense in town throughout day. Intense sniper fire from buildings. AG's and 81mm mort fired on NE part of town vic (15883430). Most of bldgs in town on fire from our arty and ey arty. At dark troops forced to withdraw to same sector of town as last night due to bldgs ahead of troops afire. Ey C/Atks of small forces forced back at 1700 and 1815. Outposted sector of town in our hands the same as last night. Troops firing harassing fire into houses with SA during night. C/Atk from East at approx 2115 successfully repelled and our defenses maintained. Contact patrols maintained with 48 Tk Bn on right and CCB on left, beginning at 1930. PW's: 4

14 Jan 45 - Further atk of Rittershoffen launched at 0900. Intense hvy ey mort fire from N of town, which held up troops considerably. Atk made by Tk-Inf teams. 2 ey tks knocked out by our troops (one Mark IV Tk and one Mark VI Tk). Woods to W of town flushed of all ey by patrols. At dark troops withdrew and held bldgs formerly held. Town still burning. (See overlay for location of troops). Friendly arty decreased intense hvy ey mort fire. Friendly arty harassing fires throughout night.

15 Jan 45 - Atk by fire continued on Rittershoffen at 0815. Tks being withdrawn a few at a time for maint and immediate return. Patrols moved out after hvy atk by fire, and engaged in fire fights. Resumed strong atk in afternoon. Ey patrols scattered by our arty fire. 81 mort and AG's active throughout day. At dark troops withdrew and held bldgs formerly occupied.

16 Jan 45 - Atk of Rittershoffen continued. Much less movement of ey vehicles, but intense hvy ey mort and arty fire continued. Steeple on church in Rittershoffen completely demolished by our Tk fire. Spasmodic ey burp gun and sniper fire from NW part of town. At darkness troops re-occupied bldgs previously held and outposted, making contact patrols with adjacent units. Friendly arty prepared for defensive harassing missions throughout night. 81mm mortars fired effectively on ey. Arty destroyed ey ammo dump. Our troops succeeded in flushing and destroying considerable ey.

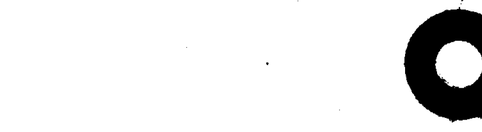
17 Jan 45 - Continued atk of Rittershoffen in conjunction with 1st Bn, 315 Inf. Troops advanced slowly under hvy sniper fire. Ey aggressive, firing on our vehicles on Kuhlendorf-Rittershoffen Road. At darkness troops held previously taken sector and placed outpost defenses, contacting adjacent units. Friendly arty prepared for defensive harassing missions throughout night. PW's: 2

18 Jan 45 - 68 continued to hold sector of Rittershoffen previously taken. 68 patrols active in conjunction with 1st Bn, 315 Inf, and 68 relieved from atchment to 1st Bn, 315 Inf effective 1100. Contact patrols contact 62d AIB on left. Ey less active today. Received some intense hvy ey arty in Rittershoffen. AG's and 81mm mortars active, firing harassing fires. Friendly arty prepared for defensive harassing missions throughout the night.

19 Jan 45 - 68 continued to hold sector of Rittershoffen previously taken. Strong combat patrols of 68 tried to force their way North in town, but were held down and forced to withdraw due to hvy ey sniper fire. 81mm mortar and 75mm AG's fired diversionary fire at (158-343) in order to permit strong combat patrol of 68 to make its way up street in W part of town in an effort to contact B-315, but without successful results. Friendly arty prepared for firing defensive harassing missions throughout night. 68 continued to hold previously taken sector of town, making contact patrols throughout the night (see overlay).

20 Jan 45 - 68 continued to hold sector previously taken. 68 withdrew upon order to Kuhlendorf, by infiltration. Withdrawal in progress from 1800 throughout the night. "Shell" force of 1 plat B-68 and Tks to remain in Rittershoffen until 210300. Co's began mtd motor march from Kuhlendorf, enroute to Waldowisheim.

21 Jan 45 - "Shell" force left Rittershoffen 0300, returned to Kuhlendorf, and with Bn Hqs and Hq Co-68 (held as rear guard in order to give protective fires with 81 mort and AG's, if necessary) began mtd motor march to Waldowisheim. Trains infiltrating to Dauendorf.



21 Jan 45 - (Cont'd) Bn completely closed in at Waldowisheim at 1230. Trains at Reutenbourg. Outposted Waldowisheim with alert security and began reorganization.

22 Jan 45 - Unit remained in assembly area, reorganizing and resupplying. Alert security posted on all roads leading out of Waldowisheim.

23 Jan 45 - B-25 atchd to 68, as well as 1-B-125. Unit and atchments began mtd motor march at 1500 to fwd assembly area at Batzendorf. Last elements of column closed Batzendorf 1805. Outposted Batzendorf (For route of march see overlay) (For security see overlay).

24 Jan 45 - Unit and atchments remained in assembly area at Batzendorf. Town heavily outposted. (see Memo, this Hq, this date, for security). Unit alert for committment.

25 Jan 45 - Unit alerted and atk jumped off 1230, objective being to tie in with unit on left vic (981257) and restore MLR. Atk formation: C-68 with 1 plat B-25, B-68 with balance of B-25. Troops advanced from Ohlungen to NE by-passing Schweighausen, circling W on either side of road, using it as axis of advance. Troops reached as far as vic (989252). At 1640 approx 100 ey debouched from woods vic (985246). Approx 50 ey wounded, 20 to 25 ey killed, with balance returning to woods. No evidence of ey armor, only SAF. At dark troops dug in along line (see overlay). 499th in support set up defensive fires for night. PW's: 68.

26 Jan 45 - Troops launched atk at 0730 from previously dug-in positions, with objective of re-establishing MLR along road in our sector vic (976255) to (993248). Despite deep snow and drifts, in addition to hvy falling snow, troops advanced with great difficulty, meeting no ey resistance, and reached the objective at 0930. Troops dug in positions along road vic (976255) to (993248) and awaited relief by 1st Bn 314 Inf. Relief was effective approx 1545. Troops were infiltrated out of positions to vic Ohlungen, mounted in vehicles for infiltration back to Batzendorf. All troops closed in Batzendorf 1545, at which time Batzendorf was outposted.

26 Jan 45 - Unit and atchments in assembly at Batzendorf; outposted the town.

27 Jan 45 - Unit and atchments remained in assembly area at Batzendorf, outposting the town.

28 Jan 45 - Unit and atchments remained in assembly area at Batzendorf, awaiting further orders.

29 Jan 45 - Unit and atchments remained in assembly area at Batzendorf, awaiting further orders.

30 Jan 45 - Unit and atchments remained in assembly area at Batzendorf, awaiting further orders.

31 Jan 45 - Unit and atchments remained in assembly area at Batzendorf. Unit contemplating movement to Bischwiller, to follow up atk of 2-142d Inf and hold in Oberhoffen.

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HEADQUARTERS 68TH ARMORED INFANTRY BATTALION
A.P.O. 446 U.S. ARMY

FEBRUARY UNIT HISTORY NARRATIVE

1 Feb 45 - Unit and attachments began mounted road march from BATZENDORF to BISCHWILLER at 1000 (see overlay for route of march). Closed in at BISCHWILLER at 1200. Men dismounted from vehicles, vehicles returning to assembly area vic MARIENTHAL (see overlay). B-25 Tk committed on separate missions approx 1400, mission being to move to SE corner of BISCHWILLER and attack woods at NE edge of OBERHOFFEN to flush ey from woods in an effort to relieve pressure on friendly troops in OBERHOFFEN: upon completion of mission to return to BISCHWILLER. B-25 attack jumped off at approx 1437, and progressed to vicinity of their mission. Tks placed heavy fire on woods NE edge of OBERHOFFEN and also NE edge of OBERHOFFEN, but were unable to flush any ey out of these areas. Intense hvy ey artillery fire on tks throughout attack. Tks reached vic (102197) and (105198). One tk, B-25, knocked out vic (105198) by direct fire from ey 88mm AP. B-25 forced to withdraw under smoke to BISCHWILLER and resumed former location. Elements of 68 remained alert in BISCHWILLER, placing local security around sector.

2 Feb 45 - A-25 (-) and B-25 with C-68, supported by Combat Team (1 Plat A-25 plus 1 sqd A-68) with mission to attack N parallel to OBERHOFFEN, avoiding town, turning NW and go between open ground between woods as far as railroad to seize and organize railroad in that vicinity; 501st FA in support, as well as 4.2 chemical mortars. C-68 jumped off followed by B-25 at 1144. A-25 (-) and Combat Team remained vic (102184). B-68 in reserve remained in BISCHWILLER. B-25 advanced reaching Phase Line #2 at 1215 and C-68 at approx 1225 (see overlay covering Phase Lines), coordinating with friendly forces in OBERHOFFEN. A-25 (-) and Combat Team brought forward approx 1400 around flank B-25 to continue on to objective; Combat Team to protect right flank of Bn. At 1455 advance elements were 400 yds N of Phase Line #2, tks firing into woods N of their positions. Advance elements reached Phase Line #3 at 1503. Tks held up by stream and irrigation canals which were impassable vic (105201). Furthest point reached by troops was Phase Line #3. Throughout day's operation drew intense ey arty fire and intense ey SAF. Regrouped around Ck Pt "E" at dark, preparatory to relieving 2d Bn 142d Inf in OBERHOFFEN tonight. A-68 rejoining unit for relief in OBERHOFFEN.

3 Feb 45 - Unit and attachments completed relief of 1st Bn 142d Inf in southern tip of OBERHOFFEN at 0300. Began relieving 2d Bn 142d Inf in OBERHOFFEN approx 1200, coordinating relief with them, completing relief at 1930. At same time defensive positions were set up in OBERHOFFEN (see overlay atchd). 1-B-125 in process of laying mines and wire tonight as shown on overlay. Unit studying plans in case of C/Atk from NE, E, and SE. D-94 coordinated patrols with 68 for night.

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16273

4 Feb 45 - Two six men patrols from A-68 and C-68 out 0945 with mission to make contact with ey and get prisoners. A-68 patrol took route along road from Ck Pt "I" (see sketch of OBERHOFFEN) and toward RR vic (107212), while C-68 took route along W edge of OBERHOFFEN. C-68 patrol reached as far as church vic (094204) without meeting ey resistance, and returned. A-68 patrol reached vic (103207), located abandoned ey AT gun at that point which they destroyed and returned. B-68 officer-led 15-man patrol departed 1115, advancing generally along road toward RR vic (107212), with mission of contacting ey. Patrol reached vic (101206) and were pinned down by ey SAF and forced to withdraw under intense ey arty and morter fire. At 1930 6 men patrol from C-68 departed after 5 min AG and 81mm mort concentration on woods N of OBERHOFFEN vic (099-206), with mission to reach vic (098206) and make contact with ey, and take prisoners. At 2100 6-men patrol from A-68 departed along W edge of OBERHOFFEN through town and N toward RR. Both of latter patrols returned (see Journal for results). (see atchd overlay for defensive positions, listening posts, etc.).

5 Feb 45 - Launched attack on OBERHOFFEN at 0730 from positions in southern part of town in an effort to clear northern part of town of ey. Troops advanced slowly under intense ey automatic wpns fire, followed by intense hvy ey arty and morter fire. Advance continued slowly as troops had to search each house for ey possibly hiding in basements. Ey strong point seemed to be NW of church. For furthest point reached by troops, see atchd sketch of OBERHOFFEN. For defensive positions for night see sketch atchd. 68 plus B-25 relieved from CCB control and passed to control of 142d RCT at 1400.

6 Feb 45 - Continued attack on OBERHOFFEN jumped off at 0830. Troops advanced slowly under ey SAF coming from vic church (Check Point 7) and spasmodic MG fire. Held up considerably by ey minefield at (0946-2050) and hvy sniper fire from buildings to their front. Troops pushed steadily forward, reaching rd jct at (09252054), rd jct at (09312056) and rd jct at (09412059). Med ey arty and morter spasmodic throughout day. For defensive positions for night see sketch of OBERHOFFEN. Active combat patrols out tonight. K-143 on right being contacted by patrol going to vic (12611780) at 2300 and 0500.

7 Feb 45 - Continued attack on OBERHOFFEN resumed 0830. Troops steadily advanced, gaining ground and bringing the major portion of the town into our control. One (1) B-25 Tk knocked out by ey bazooka team active vic Ck Pt 1 (093207). Fwd elements of our troops reached a line (09202076) thru (09332085). Relief of B-25 Tk began 1600, with relief of 68 by 1st Bn 142d RCT beginning at 1800. Troops enroute to BATZENDORF. (For route of march see atchd overlay). Upon completion relief 68 reverts to CC"B", with A-68 reverting to 25 Tk Bn.

8 Feb 45 - Bn closed in new assembly area at BATZENDORF 0320. Unit remained in assembly area and outposted the town.

9 Feb 45 - Unit remained in assembly area and outposted the town.

10 Feb 45 - Unit remained in assembly area and outposted BATZENDORF. Performed maint of veh and wpns. Reinforcements fired Rifle, Carbine, BAR, Lt & Hvy MG's. See training schedule atchd covering training.

11 Feb 45 - Unit remained in assembly area and outposted BATZENDORF. Performed maint of veh and wpns. See training schedule submitted (atchd) covering this date. Road rcn made by I&R Plat (see atchd overlay).

12 Feb 45 - Unit remained in assembly area and outposted BATZENDORF. For training see Training Schedule atchd covering this date. 60mm mortar crews fired on range for familiarization.

13 Feb 45 - Unit remained in assembly area at BATZENDORF. For training see Training Schedule atchd covering this date.

14 Feb 45 - Unit remained in assembly area at BATZENDORF. For training see Training Schedule atchd covering this date.

15 Feb 45 - Unit remained in assembly area at BATZENDORF, outposting town. For training see Training Schedule atchd covering this date.

16 Feb 45 - Unit remained in assembly area at BATZENDORF, outposting town. For training see Training Schedule atchd covering this date.

17 Feb 45 - Unit remained in assembly area at BATZENDORF, outposting town. For training see Training Schedule atchd covering this date.

18 Feb 45 - Unit remained in assembly area at BATZENDORF, outposting town. For training see Training Schedule atchd covering this date. Planning for relief of 3d Bn, 409th Inf by 200800 Feb 45. Road rcn made by I&R Plat (see atchd overlay).

19 Feb 45 - Bn cleared BATZENDORF 1930 to begin relief 3d Bn, 409th Inf. Completed relief of 3d Bn 409th Inf, without event, at 2250 and assumed defensive positions (see overlay). RINGELDORF outposted. Ten-man patrol from I&R Plat out at 2300 to reconnoiter woods vic (932275) to determine if ey is occupying positions in woods and bring back PW's. Patrol Report shows results. 1 & 2 C-25 Tk Bn remaining in initial position. (see overlay). 501st AFA prepared to fire supporting missions. Maintained contact with units on right and left.

20 Feb 45 - For results of Patrol #1 (10 man I&R Patrol) see atchd Patrol Report and overlay. 68 remained in defensive positions. Ey activity confined to sporadic arty and mortar fire during the latter part of the day. For complete plans for raiding party see atchd overlay. Contact being made with 19th AIB on left and 3d Bn 502d P.I. on right.

21 Feb 45 - For results of Raiding Party #1, see atchd report (overlay atchd). 68 remained in present defensive positions. Between 1030 and 1100 arty scored direct hit on ey truck or personnel carrier vic (901-291), damaging it. 81mm mort fired effectively on 30 ey observed vic (893294), causing a large fire with hvy black smoke. Ey activity confined to occasional rds from ey SP Gun fire which landed vic (925279). Gun seemed to move from vic (926288) back and forth in and out of woods in that vic. Maintained contact with 19th AIB on left and 3d Bn 502 PI on right. Patrol #2 out at 2400, this date, to reconnoiter route for raid of 22-23 Feb (see overlay atchd).

22 Feb 45 - For results of Patrol #2, see report and overlay atchd. 68 remained in defensive positions. Sector generally quiet throughout day, except for occasional 50mm mort harassing fire landing in UEBERACH. AG fired on estimated 75mm towed AT gun at (911312) and observed a direct hit. Arty fired on ey working party vic (927323), dispersing ey. For information on Patrol #3 out at 2200, this date, see overlay atchd.

23 Feb 45 - For results of Patrol #3, see overlay and patrol report. 68 continued improvement of defensive positions. Sector generally quiet throughout the day. Maintained contact with 19th AIB on left and 3d Bn 502d PI on right. For information on Raiding Patrol #2, out at 2200, this date, see overlay and plan previously submitted.

24 Feb 45 - For results of Raiding Party #2, see overlay and Raiding Party Report atchd. Sector generally quiet except for occasional arty fire throughout the day. Arty located and made a direct hit on one ey high velocity SP Gun in vic (91303152). For information on Patrol #4, out at 2100, this date, see overlay atchd.

25 Feb 45 - For results of Patrol #4, see overlay and Patrol report. Occasional mortar and arty fire fell in our sector throughout the day. Arty fired on ey dugout vic (935277), causing two (2) known ey casualties. For information on Patrol #5, out at 1930, this date, see overlay atchd.

26 Feb 45 - For results of Patrol #5 and #6 see overlays and Patrol Reports atchd. 68th remained in defensive positions. Sector generally quiet with increasing sporadic arty and mortar fire during the latter part of the day. For information on Patrol #7 out at 1930, see overlay atchd. Made contact with 19th AIB on left and 1st Bn, 142d on right.

27 Feb 45 - For results of Patrol #8, see overlay and Patrol Report #8. Sector generally quiet, except for occasional hvy mortar fire falling in vic of UBERACH. Relief of 68 Armd Inf Bn by 62d Armd Inf Bn began 2100, troops enroute to SAESSOLSHEIM and INGENHEIM. 68th Armd Inf Bn atchd to CC"A" upon completion of relief. (See overlay for route of march).

28 Feb 45 - Bn closed in assembly area at SAESSOLSHEIM and INGENHEIM at 0410. Unit remained in assembly area. Performed maintenance of vehicles and weapons and outposted the town. (See Plan for Defense of SAESSOLSHEIM and overlays atchd.).